



March 23, 2020

Governor Ralph Northam's Daily Briefing

Daily Numbers

- Virginia now has a total of 254 cases with six deaths. For the latest statistics, click [here](#).

Testing and Equipment

- Virginia's state lab continues to have testing capacity to perform more than 1,000 tests. This does not include testing capacity at private labs and hospitals.
- Virginia is currently working to develop a database of facilities able to do testing.
- Virginia continues to work with the federal government and private companies to help with manufacturing and distribution of supplies.

Business Restrictions

The Governor announced today that he has signed Executive Order 53, which includes the following additional restrictions on businesses.

- Closure of all dining and congregation areas in restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, tasting rooms, and farmers markets effective 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, 2020 until 11:59 p.m., Thursday, April 23, 2020.



- Restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, tasting rooms, and farmers markets may continue to offer delivery and take-out services.

- Closure of all public access to recreational and entertainment businesses, effective 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, 2020 until 11:59 p.m., Thursday, April 23, 2020:
 - Theaters, performing arts centers, concert venues, museums, and other indoor entertainment centers; Fitness centers, gymnasiums, recreation centers, indoor sports facilities, and indoor exercise facilities;
 - Beauty salons, barbershops, spas, massage parlors, tanning salons, tattoo shops, and any other location where personal care or personal grooming services are performed that would not allow compliance with social distancing guidelines to remain six feet apart;
 - Racetracks and historic horse racing facilities; and
 - Bowling alleys, skating rinks, arcades, amusement parks, trampoline parks, fairs, arts and craft facilities, aquariums, zoos, escape rooms, indoor shooting ranges, public and private social clubs, and all other places of indoor public amusement.

- Essential retail businesses may remain open during their normal business hours. Such businesses are:
 - Grocery stores, pharmacies, and other retailers that sell food and beverage products or pharmacy products, including dollar stores, and department stores with grocery or pharmacy operations;
 - Medical, laboratory, and vision supply retailers;



- Electronic retailers that sell or service cell phones, computers, tablets, and other communications technology;
 - Automotive parts, accessories, and tire retailers as well as automotive repair facilities;
 - Home improvement, hardware, building material, and building supply retailers;
 - Lawn and garden equipment retailers;
 - Beer, wine, and liquor stores;
 - Retail functions of gas stations and convenience stores;
 - Retail located within healthcare facilities;
 - Banks and other financial institutions with retail functions;
 - Pet and feed stores;
 - Printing and office supply stores; and
 - Laundromats and dry cleaners.
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- Any brick and mortar retail business not listed in above may continue to operate but must limit all in-person shopping to no more than 10 patrons per establishment. This does not include staff. If any such business cannot adhere to the 10-patron limit with proper social distancing requirements, it must close.
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 - All businesses are required to adhere to social distancing recommendations, enhanced sanitizing practices on common surfaces, and other appropriate workplace guidance from state and federal authorities while in operation.
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- Although business operations offering professional rather than retail services are allowed to remain open, but it is recommended that they utilize teleworking as much as possible and where telework is not feasible,



businesses are required to adhere to social distancing recommendations, enhanced sanitizing practices on common surfaces, and apply the relevant workplace guidance from state and federal authorities.

In response to questions, he noted the following:

- There are no restrictions on the construction industry.
- Business restrictions outlined by the Governor will be enforced by localities.

Workforce issues

- Last week, 40,000 people filed unemployment claims. This is expected to continue to increase.
- Virginia is seeking flexibility in how it disperses unemployment insurance.

Education/child care updates

- The Governor's Executive Order released today also closes all schools, public and private, through the remainder of this school year.
- Guidance from the Superintendent will be forthcoming to help school divisions with course completion. Options being considered include remote learning, extending the 2021-2022 school year, adapting the curriculum for the 2021-2022 school year to address those items not covered this school year, or some combination.
- School divisions will have the authority on this.
- Facilities providing child care services are allowed to remain open.



- The Governor urged child care providers to prioritize services for children of essential personnel, while asking all families with the ability to keep their children home, to do so.
- To that end, the Virginia Department of Social Services and the Virginia Department of Education will issue guidance to communities about operationalizing emergency child care services for essential personnel.

Access to food

Those families struggling with the need for food were invited to text “FOOD” or “COMIDA” to 877877 to receiving information about feeding sites close to them.

Mental health needs

The Governor noted that we are going to face higher rates of depression, substance abuse and domestic violence during this crisis and that we need to take care for one another.

Parks and beaches

When asked about closing parks and beaches, the Governor said he will be working with localities on encouraging social distancing in parks and on beaches.

ABC stores



ABC stores will continue to stay open with social distancing and sanitation requirements.

Faith community restrictions

There are no current restrictions around this although social distancing and sanitation measures are recommended. The Governor noted that we are seeing lots of flexibility around providing ways for people to exercise their faith. He planned to have a call with faith leaders today.

Price gouging

The Governor said we are watching for price gouging very closely but have not seen it in Virginia to date.

Transportation

- No restrictions have been placed on commercial transportation (i.e., commercial bus services).
- There have been no changes to tolls in Virginia to date.

To view today's briefing, click [here](#).